

## Remarks

The present response is to the Office Action mailed the above-referenced case on September 26, 2006, made final. Claims 1-12 are standing for examination. Claims 1-5, and 7-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as being anticipated by Haigh (US 456,257). Claims 1-4, 6, 7 and 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ljungberg (2,062,519) in view of Condon (5,307,841) or Turnwald (6,607,087) hereinafter Turnwald and further in view of Haigh.

In response to the Examiner's rejections and statements, applicant herein amends the independent claims to positively recite a waist portion on the screw stem body positioned between the tapered head and the threaded portion having a diameter smaller than both the tapered head and the screw stem body, thereby retaining the elastic enclosure. Claim 2 is herein canceled.

As shown in applicant's drawings screw stem 200 is a core component of a device used with a closed rubber-like socket 205 for mechanically sealing and unsealing an annular opening according to one embodiment of the present invention. Screw stem 200 includes a tapered head portion 206, which tapers down to form a neck or waist 201. Stem 200 is used with a closed rubber-like socket 205 instead of a sleeve as described with respect to the example of Fig. 1.

Neck 201 tapers outward to a screw stem body section 204 having a threaded portion 202 provided to engage a turning nut, which will later be described. Neck 201 provides a waist section between head 206 and stem body section 204 for retaining rubber-like socket 205.

Applicant argues that Haigh fails to teach or show in the drawings that the elastic enclosure extends over the tapered head as claimed. Haigh also fails to teach a waist portion of the screw step body having a smaller diameter than the tapered head and the screw stem portion for retaining the elastic enclosure as shown in Figs 2A, 7A & 7B. Applicant points out that the waist portion also provides a hollow space convenient for gathering the elastic enclosure for deformation outward when the tapered head traverses in an upward direction.

Applicant points out that Ljungberg and the rest of the art produced by the Examiner also fail to show the elastic enclosure extending over the tapered head, which applicant points out would increase the devices ability to stop fluid leakage and the ability to deform the elastic enclosure outwards. The art also fails to show the limitation of the waist portion as recited in applicant's independent claims, as amended.

Applicant also takes issue with the Examiner's use of Ljungberg as analogous art. Applicant's claims, as amended, recite a vessel containing liquid, wherein the problem to be solved is stopping the liquid from escaping the vessel. Applicant argues there would be no motivation for one with skill in the art to look at an apparatus for plugging and testing an industrial pipe as in Ljungberg with the need to separate by the elastic enclosure from any contents of the vessel to be sealed. Additionally, industrial pipe of Ljungberg cannot read on applicant's vessel as claimed. Vessels are enclosed bodies as known in the art. Condon also teaches a test plug for industrial pipe.

Applicant believes that claims 1 and 9, as amended and argued are easily patentable over the art provided by the Examiner. Claims 2-8 and 10-12 are patentable on their own merits, or at least as depending from a patentable claim.

As all of the claims standing for examination have been shown to be patentable over the art of record, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration, and that the present

case be passed quickly to issue. If there are any time extensions needed beyond any extension specifically requested with this response, such extension of time is hereby requested. If there are any fees due beyond any fees paid with this amendment, authorization is given to deduct such fees from deposit account 50-0534.

Respectfully Submitted,  
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